

## How do you do, Sir?

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**I** AM very glad of this opportunity of meeting with you, and assure you, that I do not ask how you do as a mere compliment, but from a hearty desire of hearing that you do well. It will always give me much pleasure to meet you in health and prosperity; but as eternity is longer than time, in the same proportion is the soul of greater consequence than the body; I therefore most affectionately ask, **HOW DO YOU DO** respecting that part which is to last while GOD himself endures?—I am under the painful necessity of telling you of my having been informed that your conduct, concerning eternal things, is highly blamable; that you knowingly, wilfully, and habitually sin against Him who created you. Surely a person of any reflection cannot be ignorant, that “the eyes of the Lord” “are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,” *Prov. xv. 3.*—and that “God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil,” *Ecc. xii. 14.*

How sad then, is the consideration, that “the God in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways, you have not glorified,” *Dan. v. 23.*

But permit me farther to ask, **HOW DO YOU DO** respecting the precious book that God has blessed you with? I mean the Bible; perhaps you are partly a stranger to the passages already mentioned.—Is it your practice to read this book? to search it with diligent care, in order to discover a proper knowledge of your present state, and of the way of salvation? or are you suffering it to remain covered with dust and neglected?

HOW DO YOU DO about prayer?—Daniel, that servant of the Living God, “kneeled down upon his knees three times a-day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.” *Dan. vi. 10.*; and are you acting so irrational a part as to live almost without it?—It has often been a question with me, whether you bowed before your God, at your going to rest and rising up again, or not:—I am now determined that you shall not neglect so important a piece of business for want of being reminded of it; and will try to make such impressions upon your mind, as you will not soon forget.—I cannot bear the thought of your losing the comforts of religion, the joys of heaven, and the company of God himself, for want of asking for those blessings.

HOW DO YOU DO respecting the great change that must take place in you before you can possibly be admitted into heaven? In your present state you are totally unfit for either the place or company.—You are a sinner; one who is living in the practice of something that God hates, and in the neglect of what he commands. On these accounts the Lord is displeased, *Psal. vii. 11.*

Having discovered HOW YOU DO, and being much alarmed at your condition, suffer me to point out the only remedy.

*First*, Be open to conviction,—be willing to know the exact state that you are in,—most devoutly pray to Him who came to be “a light to lighten the Gentiles,” *Luke ii. 32.* that He will help you to understand what you are “by nature,” *Eph. ii. 3.*; by practice, *Col. i. 21.*; and what you must do to be saved.

If you remain careless and insensible of your danger, there is no hope of your salvation; for “the whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick,” *Matt. ix. 12.*; that is, none will seek for a remedy but such as feel they want it. The first step towards a cure, is to be made sensible of your disease. In order, then, to alarm your fears, and put you upon instantly seeking out for help, hear the sentence of eternal death pronounced against you: “THE SOUL THAT SINNETH SHALL DIE,” *Ezek. xviii. 20.* But blessed be God, although the sentence is pronounced, it is not yet put into execution, and there is one way, and only one, by which a pardon may still be obtained.

Behold! a Mediator is found: Jesus, the sinner’s only refuge, draws near and tells you what you must do to be

faved: His words are, *Mark i. 15.* "REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL." How rational the doctrine, that a sinner should repent! and how comfortable that there is pardon for penitent sinners in Christ Jesus, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood," *Rom. iii. 25.*

Reflect a little, and you will find how exactly these instructions suit yourself: Sins committed, and duties neglected, have disgraced the conduct of every day which you can remember. Certainly, then, it is highly necessary that you should be deeply humbled and ashamed before God for those your misdoings, and that you should feel sorrow and pain of mind on account of having sinned against your Maker and Redeemer, who has spared you so many years, and from whom you have received all your blessings. An evangelical contrition for sin, is always accompanied with a forsaking of it, *Prov. xxviii. 13.* and is in Scripture called REPENTANCE.

This is a work of such vast importance, and so absolutely necessary, that without it all pretensions to religion are vain, and any hope of heaven is without foundation. He who is to sit in judgment upon your soul, and will pronounce the important sentence, "Go, ye cursed, or "Come, ye blessed," has told you before-hand, that except you repent you must perish, *Luke xiii. 5.*; and St. Paul publishes to the whole world, that "the times of ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent," *Acts xvii. 30.*

I hope that by this time you see the reasonableness of our Lord's command, REPENT, and that you are convinced that no man has greater need to attend to it than yourself. But if you still remain at ease in your sins, if your conscience is not awakened, if you are not alarmed at your situation, in one word, if you are not a PENITENT, it will be in vain to say any thing to you respecting the other part of the direction given by the Saviour of men, BELIEVE THE GOSPEL, as it does not at all belong to you; for, in your present state, you can neither understand nor practise it: No, you must remember that the publican felt himself a sinner, and from the distress and anguish of his soul smote upon his breast, earnestly crying for pardon, before he was sent to his house justified, *Luke xviii. 13.*; and the jailer at Philippi came trembling to the apostles, Paul and Silas, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" before he was bid to "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST," *Acts xvi. 30.*



However, hoping that you are not a cast-away, that your conscience is not "seared as with a hot iron," 1 *Tim.* iv. 2. observing some commotion in your mind, I will now tell you, that to BELIEVE THE GOSPEL, or to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul, is to embrace the Saviour, as he stands offered in the gospel to poor "heavy-laden sinners," *Mat.* xi. 28. He died, "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God," 1 *Pet.* iii. 18. "He bare our sins in his body upon the tree," 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. "There is now a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness;" the guilty of all descriptions are invited to come to this fountain, and wash away their sin, "calling upon the name of the Lord," *Acts* xxii. 16. Obey the gospel invitation, and return to God by Jesus Christ. Trust in his precious blood for the pardon of your sin, and in his grace for deliverance from the practice of it: So shall you not perish, but have everlasting life.

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For your further information in religious truths, I beg leave to recommend to your serious perusal a book entitled "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul, by P. Doddridge, D. D." or "Allein's Alarm to the Unconverted," either of which any bookseller has, or can procure for you.

